

REBECCA COHN eNEWSLETTER

for the twenty-fourth Assembly District

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Cohn's Comment



Hear disease has been widely considered to afflict mostly overweight men. Quite the opposite is true, however. Since February is "American Heart Month," I'd like to take this opportunity to talk about how heart disease has become the number one killer of women and what everyone can do to reduce their risk factors.

The American Heart Association (AHA) has created the "Go Red for Women" campaign to educate women about their cardiovascular risk-factors and life-saving changes they can incorporate into their lives to lessen the threat of cardiovascular disease. The campaign has designated this Friday, February 3rd as National Wear Red Day for Women. I will be wearing red to help fight against heart disease in women and I encourage you to as well.

African-Americans, Latinos, other ethnic minorities and women are at a higher risk for heart disease. Lifestyle is another indicator of being in an at-risk group. Physical inactivity is more prevalent among women than men, among African-Americans and Latinos than whites, among older than younger adults. Age is important as well since women at older ages who have heart attacks are more likely than men to die of them.

There are universal risk factors that everyone can monitor and improve upon to reduce their risk of heart disease. They are:

1. High blood pressure
2. Smoking
3. High cholesterol
4. Physical inactivity
5. Being overweight

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Upcoming District Events

Cal Grant Workshops

This workshop will help students in filling out financial aid forms including the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to apply for Cal Grants.

Saturday, February 18, 2006

10:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Willow Glen High School

2001 Cottle Avenue, San Jose, CA

and

Wednesday, March 1, 2006

2:00 PM to 8:00 PM

San Jose City College

2100 Moorpark Avenue, San Jose, CA

For more information, contact Gabe Gopen at
(408) 282-8920 or gabe.gopen@asm.ca.gov.

Advanced Health Care Directive (AHCD) Workshop

The AHCD is a legal form that allows you to record your final wishes, such as organ donation, do not resuscitate orders and designation of who is allowed to make decisions on your behalf.

Attendees will receive a FREE AHCD kit.

Thursday, February 23, 2006

6:00 PM to 7:30 PM

Santa Clara City Council Chambers

1500 Warburton Avenue, Santa Clara, CA

For more information, contact Tori Ueda at
(408) 282-8920 or tori.ueda@asm.ca.gov.

Emergency Preparedness Faire

Presentations will be made on different elements of emergency preparedness including fire, flood, and earthquake.

Saturday, February 25, 2006

10:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Campbell Community Center –

Orchard City Banquet Hall

1 West Campbell Avenue, Campbell, CA

For more information, contact Julie Lind at
(408) 282-8920 or julie.lind@asm.ca.gov. ♦

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6. Diabetes

Your healthcare provider can help you determine if any of these are a specific risk for you.

Recognizing the signs of a heart attack is another important defense. Some warning signs of a heart attack are:

1. Chest discomfort
2. Discomfort in other areas such as jaw, neck and upper back
3. Shortness of breath
4. Cold, sweat, nausea and dizziness

If you experience any of these symptoms, seek immediate medical attention.

Being prepared in the event of a heart attack can save lives as well. In one afternoon, you could learn how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and how to use an automated external defibrillator (AED), two skills that can help save the life of a victim of sudden cardiac arrest. The more prepared we are to treat sudden cardiac arrest, the more lives we can save.

The good news is that there are many proactive steps you can take to reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease.

1. Have your doctor evaluate your risk factors during your check-up. Get your blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose levels checked. Ask your doctor to help you reach or maintain a healthy weight.
2. Quit smoking. Again, consult your physician about a safe and effective method of quitting cigarettes.
3. Add or increase the cardiovascular exercise in your routine. While 30 minutes of exercise five times a week is ideal, building toward this goal gradually has been shown to have a higher rate of people sticking to their plan.
4. Adjust your diet. Make sure you are getting your recommended daily allowance of fruits, vegetables and fiber. Limit your calories from fat to 30% or less.
5. Track and reward your successes, keeping track of your exercise, smoking cessation and diet goals. Reward yourself when you reach a benchmark!

If you would like to learn more about what you can do to help protect your family from all the various forms of heart disease, call the AHA at 800-AHA-USA1 (800-242-8721), or visit their website at www.americanheart.org.

— Rebecca Cohn

Assemblymember.Cohn@assembly.ca.gov ♦

Winter Conservation Program Offers Rebate

SAN JOSE – Natural gas costs increased dramatically this winter causing higher gas bills. PG&E has responded with a conservation incentive program that rewards customers with a rebate.

PG&E's new 10/20 Winter Gas Savings Program will offer residential and small business customers a 20% rebate for reducing total natural gas usage by 10% or more from January 1 through March 31, 2006, compared to same months in 2005. Successful participants will receive a 20% rebate on their April or May bill for all three program months. Since customers' meters may not be read on either the 1st or 31st of the month usage may be prorated, so it is important to start conserving right away and continue until the April bill arrives.

Because the furnace and water heater are the two biggest sources of natural gas use in winter, conservation can be managed comfortably by following a few easy tips:

Estimated Savings	Natural Gas Saving Tips
Up to 10-15%	Turn your thermostat 5-10° below where you typically set it, and even lower at night or when you're away (health permitting)
Up to 5-10%	Seal leaks in heating ducts and around doors and windows
Up to 5%	Set water heater at 120° or medium setting
Up to 3-5%	Install energy-saving showerheads and faucet aerators; wash your clothes in cold water

Demand for natural gas remains high nationwide, keeping the prices high as well. PG&E forecasts that the average residential natural gas bills will be 40-50% higher this winter, compared to last year.

It is important to note that PG&E buys natural gas from suppliers and passes it on to customers at cost. As a result, PG&E does not profit from higher natural gas prices. Instead, PG&E is paid a regulated, set fee to deliver gas, which doesn't change when gas prices go up.

PG&E is also expanding its payment options and financial assistance as part of its Winter Customer Care and Relief Program. Income limits were recently increased so that more low- and fixed-income, disabled and elderly customers can qualify for the California Alternative Rates for Energy Program.

The 10/20 Winter Gas Savings Program is expected to provide customers with bill rebates totaling up to \$158 million. All residential and small business customers are eligible as long as they have been at their current location (home or residence) since January 1, 2005. There is no sign-up, and enrollment is automatic.

For more information on energy savings programs and tips visit www.pge.com/wintergas or contact Mark Vanni at (408) 282-8920 or mark.vanni@asm.ca.gov. ♦

Cohn Introduces Comprehensive Public Safety Package

SACRAMENTO – Assemblymember Cohn has developed a comprehensive bill package dealing with public safety issues. The bills in this package are:

AB 44 – Cell Phone Destruction:

Increases the penalty for the destruction of or the obstruction of the use of a cell phone during an assault to one year in jail.

AB 64 – Recording Crimes: Lowers the threshold for the possession of pirated CD's to from 1000 to 100.

AB 96 – GPS for High Risk Sex Offenders:

Mandates minute by minute tracking of High Risk Sex Offenders from the time they are paroled to the time they register with local law enforcement.

AB 120 – Child Abuse

in DV Cases: Gets rid of the 5 year washout for prior evidence of child abuse in domestic violence cases.

AB 167 – Electronic Harassment:

Makes it a misdemeanor to contact someone two or more times with the intent to harass or annoy them, regardless of how the contact is made.

AB 1788 – Drivers License Renewal

for Sex Offenders: Requires sex

offenders to renew their drivers licenses every year and requires them to show proof of address, restricting them from renewing by mail and having an address be a P.O. Box.

AB 1789 – Great Bodily Injury Enhancement for Child Physical Abuse

- Increases, from 5 to 15 years, the penalty if a child sustains injury to the nervous system or a muscular mechanism as a result of child abuse.

AB 1872 – Felony Assault on a Pregnant Woman:

Creates an enhancement of 5 years on assault committed against a pregnant woman during commission of felony domestic violence.

Mandatory Counseling for Juvenile Repeat Sex Offenders:

Expands the list of crimes in the definition of violent sexual offense that require counseling and treatment for juveniles.

Sex with Minors: Increases the penalties for those who molest minors under their care.

For more information, contact Richard Woonacott at (916)319-2024 or richard.woonacott@asm.ca.gov. ♦



Cohn on the Assembly Floor

Cohn Offers Internships

SAN JOSE – Assemblymember Rebecca Cohn is currently looking for college and high school level interns at her district office in downtown San Jose. These internships are a great opportunity for students to get involved in State government, develop useful job skills, and even get a head start on a political career. Students will gain experience in a professional work environment, build their resumes, and have the opportunity to network with professionals in a number of fields.

Students will gain a unique understanding of State government by working directly with constituents to help resolve problems with various state agencies. Interns will also assist the district office staff with written communication, including correspondence, reports and speeches.

College level interns will have the additional opportunity to help organize outreach events.

Interested students are encouraged to contact Tori Ueda in the district office at (408) 282-8920, or by email at tori.ueda@asm.ca.gov. ♦

Seniors and Disabled Ride Free with VTA through March

SAN JOSE – The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is reaching out to the senior and disabled communities to encourage transit use and to demonstrate the benefits of staying active.

From January 1 through March 31, 2006, anyone who is eligible for the Senior/Disabled/Medicare Fare will be able to ride free all day on weekends and weekdays from 9 AM to 3 PM or anytime after 6 PM. The program is intended to help familiarize these communities with public

transit and provide them with opportunities to try out the service.

The new Vasona light rail extension, which runs through the heart of the 24th Assembly District, will help to provide additional access to restaurants, cultural venues, community activities and shopping in downtown areas.

Assemblymember Rebecca Cohn rode on the inaugural ride of the Vasona extension and has used light rail to commute to her downtown office.

This free opportunity will hopefully give individuals who are currently unfamiliar with VTA services a chance to learn schedules and routes and incorporate public transit into their lives. It is simple to qualify for the Senior/Disabled/Medicare Fare; you must present **one** of the following forms of identification:

- California Drivers License
- California Identification Card
- Regional Transportation Card
- Medicare Card

- Department of Motor Vehicles Disabled License Plate registration
- Department Motor Vehicles Disabled Parking Placard printout
- Alien Registration Card
- Passport
- Birth Certificate
- Valid card from another transit provider
- Proof of age (65 and older)

For more information about VTA services, call VTA Customer Service at (408) 321-2300 or log on to www.vta.org. ♦